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Lucia A Keegan 12/01/2006 06:00:03 PM From DB/Inbox: Lucia A Keegan

Cable
Text:

UNCLAS PARIS 07639

SIPDIS
cyparis:
ACTION: AGR
INFO: DCM AMB ECON TRDO UNESCO SCI POL ECNO

DISSEMINATION: AGRX
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AGR: MMEADOR
DRAFTED: AGR: MCHENARD
CLEARED: ECON: JHENNESSEY-NILAND SCI:RDRY (INFO)

VZCZCFRI548
RR RUEHC RUEHRC RUCNMEM RUEHMRE RUEHSR RUEHGV
RHEHAAA
DE RUEHFR #7639 3351550
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 011550Z DEC 06
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3520
RUEHRC/USDA FAS WASHDC
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES
RUEHMRE/AMCONSUL MARSEILLE 1462
RUEHSR/AMCONSUL STRASBOURG 0266
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2546
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC

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SIPDIS

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STATE FOR OES; EUR/ERA AND EB(SPIRNAK);
STATE PASS USTR FOR MURPHY;
USDA/OS/JOHANNIS/TERPSTRA;
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OCRA/CURTIS
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EU POSTS PASS TO AGRICULTURE AND ECON
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SUBJECT: GOF EXTENDS BAN ON GM RAPESEEDS

11. On November 24, the Government of France extended its ban on two biotech-rapeseed products to April 18, 2007, despite the WTO decision that Member State bans were not supported by scientific evidence and were inconsistent with WTO rules. These decrees are available at: www.legifrance.gouv.fr.

12. The two rapeseed products, Topas 19/2 and MS1Bn, were originally authorized under EU Directive 90/220 and subsequently notified under the Novel Food Regulation 1829/2003. Products under this Regulation have a renewal date of April 18, 2007.

13. (SBU) Comment: According to Embassy sources, the manufacturer of these rapeseed products, Bayer CropScience, has not sold either product in the U.S. or Canada since 2001 and has no plans to market either of these products in France or in any EU Member State.

14. (SBU) Bayer had hoped to benefit from having these products authorized under the Novel Food Regulation EU-wide in the unlikely scenario of unintentional contamination. As authorized GM products, Bayer could avail itself of the 0.9 percent threshold for adventitious presence in imports by the EU. However, the continuation of the French ban means that any product found in France containing the GM rapeseed products would be an unauthorized

biotech product.

15. (SBU) The GOF decision to extend these bans may also be politically motivated. According to sources within the Prime Minister's cabinet, the GOF is extremely reluctant to authorize biotech rapeseed for cultivation due to gene flow concerns, and is justified under the precautionary principle. The ban's expiration date of April 18, 2007, being only four days before the first round of the French Presidential election, indicates that the current government is very reluctant to take any positive decision on this issue. Several Presidential hopefuls have already adopted anti-biotech positions. End Comment.

Stapleton